ANIL AGGRAWAL'S
Internet Journal of
Forensic Medicine and Toxicology
The world's first online journal devoted entirely to forensic medicine and toxicology · Published 1 January and 1 July

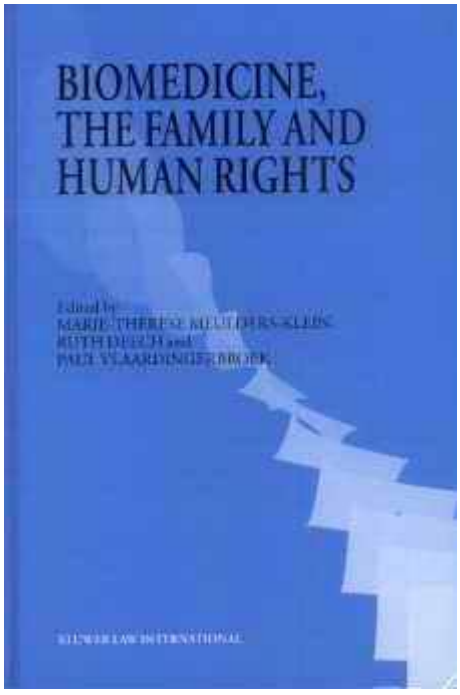
VOL. 5, NO. 1
Downloaded from www.anilaggrawal.com · ISSN 0972-8074 (Online) · https://www.anilaggrawal.com/ij/vol_005_no_001/reviews/tb/page007.html

Book Reviews: Technical Books Section

A THOROUGHLY GOOD BOOK

Biomedicine, The family and Human Rights, 1st Edition, *edited by* Marie-Thérèse Meulders-Klein, Ruth Deech and Paul Vlaardingerbroek. Hard Bound, 6.5" x 9.5".
Martinus Nijhoff, (An Imprint of Brill Academic Publishers), P.O. Box 9000, 2300 PA Leiden, The Netherlands. . . E-mail: marketing@brill.nl. Publication Date April 2002, 652 pp., ISBN 90-411-1627-3. Price EUR 175.00 / USD 160.00 / GBP 110.00

Click cover to buy from Amazon



WARNING: About forty percent of the book is written in French and our knowledge of French is as good as the speech of a newborn child i.e. nil. So what we would be telling will be applicable to only about sixty percent of the book. So whatever is your decision about this book, keep this fact in mind.

This book contains the proceedings of the conference held at St. Anne's College at Oxford University from 27-30 August 1999 to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the International Society

of Family Law (ISFL). The topic of the conference was Biomedicine, the Family and Human Rights. The book contains the lectures as delivered by the participants of the conference. They have been presented in the same form as they were delivered. This is the reason almost half of the book is in French.

The first part of the book describes the various laws applicable to biomedicine and the research in biotechnology. This is a good beginning as it makes one familiar with the various laws prevalent in the EC and how they are implemented. It also tells about the amount of research done in the field of biomedicine and genetics. This acts as some sort of a preview for the remaining book.

View this book on Amazon

The next part describes the laws related to human cloning, genetics and artificial procreation as prevalent in various countries. As one goes through this section one gets a feeling that one is reading the same thing again and again. The laws barring minor changes are similar in almost all developed countries. Things like consent, laws for genetic research and cloning,, laws governing research in biotechnology etc. are the same in almost all countries about which it has been mentioned in the book. This feeling of *déjà vu* gets bigger as one goes through the book. This might even make one bored of the book after some time but it is not the fault of the editors if the laws governing these issues are the same all over the world.

There are some important ethical questions raised in the chapter describing the laws prevalent in the US. These include the questions relating to the custody of children born of various assisted fertilization techniques, the amount of research to be allowed in biotechnology etc. These are the questions most relevant today in the era of fast developing techniques when the pace of new developments is far greater than the pace of the relevant laws and the methods governing them.

...The description of Biomedical Diplomacy and risk society by Derek Morgan and Robert Lee in their article is laudable. Their handling of the controversial issues like the formulation of the laws for assisted reproduction technologies, how the new developments are to be handled by foreseeing their dangers/harms etc. are very good..... ....we feel this is a thoroughly good book to go through if one is looking for the current views on the debate over the various techniques discussed in this book...

Having discussed the various laws prevalent all over the world, PART THREE of the book deals with the ways these and other laws are meant to be implemented. The description of *Biomedical Diplomacy and risk society* by Derek Morgan and Robert Lee in their article is laudable. Their handling of the controversial issues like the formulation of the laws for assisted reproduction technologies, how the new developments are to be handled by foreseeing their dangers/harms etc. are very good. They further go on to discuss the various ethical and moral issues confounding the world today. These are the most important questions which one encounters when one encounters issues of this magnitude. Ethics is taken as the strongest defense against the research for reproductive technologies and cloning. Their inclusion lends a sense of completion to the book. The summary at the end of the chapter where the authors have given a summary of the various laws prevalent in various countries makes this chapter complete in itself. In the chapter "Artificial Procreation in the Nordic Countries", Linda Nielsen has mentioned about the consensus and divergence between the Scandinavian countries. This acts like a synopsis telling about the various similarities and differences among these countries. A detailed account of such comparison between other countries also would have added more flair to the book.

We are aware that this book is just a compilation of the essays presented at the conference and the editors have no control over the contents of the speakers' speeches. Still we feel that the book suffers from a lot of repetition. After a while this gets to the reader's nerves and he starts to feel why he is going through the same thing again and again. Another aspect that we would like to state is that about half the book is in French. This can make one feel that he is only getting half of his money's worth. A better alternative could have been to give a brief summary of every chapter in the language other than the one in which it is written. Barring these minor glitches, we feel this is a thoroughly good book to go through if one is looking for the current views on the debate over the various techniques discussed in this book.

-Puneet Setia and Avneesh Gupta
Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology,
Maulana Azad Medical College,
New Delhi, India



Dr. Puneet Setia is working as a resident doctor in the department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology at Maulana Azad Medical College (MAMC), New Delhi. His research interests include Forensic Radiology, especially the use of radiology in demonstrating coronary narrowing at the post-mortem examination. He is associated with Anil Aggrawal's Internet Journal of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology as a writer and book reviewer. He can be contacted at puneetsetia@rediffmail.com



Dr. Avneesh Gupta is a Senior Resident doctor in the department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology at MAMC. His research interests include cranio-cerebral trauma. Dr. Gupta has written a very erudite thesis on cranio-cerebral trauma, which can be accessed by clicking here. He is associated with Anil Aggrawal's Internet Journal of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology as a writer and book reviewer. He can be contacted at avneeshgupta2000@yahoo.com

Request a PDF file of this review by clicking here. (If your screen resolution can not be increased, or if printing this page is giving you problems like overlapping of graphics and/or tables etc, you can take a proper printout from a pdf file. You will need an Acrobat Reader though.)

[Cumulative reviews of Software/Multimedia | Books on CD/Audio tapes] [contact us]